

# **Chemical Safety Vulnerability Working Group Report**



**Volume 2 of 3  
September 1994**

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **TASKING MEMORANDUMS**





## The Secretary of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

February 14, 1994

**MEMORANDUM FOR** TARA O'TOOLE, M. D., M. P. H.  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENT, SAFETY  
AND HEALTH

FROM:

HAZEL R OLEARY

SUBJECT:

VULNERABILITY REVIEW OF CHEMICAL SAFETY AT  
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY FACILITIES

Recent events have emphasized the need for a thorough assessment of the chemical safety vulnerabilities associated with Department of Energy facilities that are in transition, or are awaiting decontamination and decommissioning. These events include the chemical explosion that occurred at the Tomsk nuclear processing plant in Russia, as well as operational mishaps resulting in chemical exposures at Department of Energy facilities. This assessment will provide valuable baseline information for important policy issues that are being addressed by the Department.

The Office of Environment, Safety and Health will lead the assessment, with full participation of Department of Energy line programs with operational responsibilities. This assessment will identify, characterize, and assess the environment, safety, and health vulnerabilities associated with hazardous chemicals at Department of Energy facilities. It will examine existing conditions, activities, and approaches at the Department's facilities. This review will give particular attention to evaluating inactive facilities targeted for or currently undergoing decontamination and decommissioning.

This assessment is to be designed to be closely coordinated with and benefit from the ongoing Surplus Facility Inventory and Assessment Project being conducted by the Office of Environmental Restoration and Waste Management.

By March 18, 1994, the Office of Environment, Safety and Health should provide a project plan that outlines needed support and proposed schedules to all affected Headquarters and field elements. Field activities at most facilities should be initiated as quickly as possible thereafter. The Assistant Secretary for Environment, Safety and Health will submit a final report to me by July 29, 1994.

In conjunction with this assessment, the Office of Defense Programs will continue and expand its ongoing review to additional facilities which may have operations involving organic-nitrate reactions, which were implicated in the Tomsk explosion. This review is to be completed by July 29, 1994.





## Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

February 10, 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL DEPARTMENTAL ELEMENTS

FROM :

TARA O'TOOLE, M. D., M.P.H. *Tara O'Toole*  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
ENVIRONMENT , SAFETY AND HEALTH

SUBJECT :

VULNERABILITY REVIEW OF CHEMICAL SAFETY

The Secretary of Energy has directed the Office of Environment, Safety and Health to initiate a thorough assessment of chemical safety vulnerabilities associated with Department of Energy facilities, particularly those that have been in extended shutdown, are in transition, or are awaiting decontamination and decommissioning. Chemical safety hazards at those inactive facilities are least understood and are becoming increasingly important as the Department's mission continues to shift to cleanup and decontamination and decommissioning. A final report on the results of this vulnerability assessment is due to the Secretary on July 29, 1994.

The Office of Environment, Safety and Health has been designated **as** the focal point for the chemical safety vulnerability initiative. In order to ensure completeness and validity of the results, program offices, operations offices, and management and operating contractors will be fully involved in the assessment process. As with the recent Spent Fuel Initiative, that involvement will also be invaluable in establishing priorities and planning actions in response to the results.

For that reason, I am establishing the Chemical Safety Vulnerability Working Group, which will represent all departmental elements. The working group will be chaired by Michael Kilpatrick of the Office of Environment (EH-20). Each program and operations office should appoint a senior representative to the working group. The operations offices should facilitate participation by management and operating contractors and by laboratory management. (Information about an initial meeting of the working group is attached.)

This cooperative effort is in keeping with the Secretary's policy of providing a total quality management approach to departmental activities and is intended to accomplish the following specific goals:



- o Identify any existing situations involving hazardous chemicals that need to be addressed to protect the environment, or public or worker health.
- o Enhance the existing inventory of the types and locations of chemicals that are of concern to worker health and safety, especially at inactive facilities.
- o Identify and prioritize vulnerabilities related to future decontamination and decommissioning activities at inactive facilities.
- o As vulnerabilities are identified, a management action plan for eliminating or addressing such vulnerabilities will be developed.

To maximize the benefits of this effort, the chemical vulnerabilities review will parallel ongoing efforts through the Office of Defense Programs to evaluate the potential for organic-nitrate reactions (similar to the April 1993 explosion in Tomsk Russia) at Department of Energy facilities. The Secretary has directed the Office of Defense Programs to broaden that review and complete an evaluation of vulnerabilities at all Department of Energy facilities by July 29, 1994. The expanded review will be performed under the direction of Dr. Charles Gilbert (301-903-5012) by the same team of professionals assembled to evaluate the Tomsk explosion.

In addition, the chemical vulnerabilities initiative has been and will continue to be fully coordinated with the Office of Field Management. Every effort will be made by the Chemical Safety Vulnerability Working Group to minimize the impact of the group's activities on field operations. Field activities associated with this review will be initiated as soon as possible after completion of a project plan. However, the vulnerability assessment will be closely coordinated with data collection and validation activities being conducted by the Surplus Facility Inventory and Assessment Project, which is managed by the Office of Environmental Restoration and Waste Management, and vulnerability review activities at inactive facilities addressed by the Project will be sequenced to build upon the results of the Project in assessing vulnerabilities.

If you have any questions about this initiative, please do not hesitate to contact Michael Kilpatrick (202-586-4419) or Rebecca Hansen (301-903-5791), the Deputy Chairperson of the Working Group.

Attachment

cc : Laboratories  
All Management and Operating Contractors



INITIAL MEETING  
OF THE  
CHEMICAL SAFETY VULNERABILITY WORKING GROUP

WHEN: March 1-2, 1994

WHO: A senior representative with background/expertise in chemical safety issues should be designated from:

- o Each DOE Program Office
- o Each DOE Operations Office, Site Office and Field Office
- o Each Laboratory and M&O Contractor

Working Group representatives will be actively involved in all phases of the Vulnerability Study through completion July 29, 1994.

Large sites are requested to provide two or more representatives. Operations offices are requested to facilitate full participation by Laboratories and M&O Contractors.

PURPOSE: To develop Project Plan and approach for Vulnerability Review of Chemical Safety.

WHERE: Gaithersburg Hilton  
620 Perry Parkway  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877  
(301) 977-8900  
Toll Free for Reservations: 1-800-599-5111  
Rate: \$85/daily, tax included

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Hilton for February 28-March 1, 1994. Each attendee must confirm his/her reservation before February 23, 1994. Please reference the Department of Energy Chemical Safety Workshop when making a reservation.

TENTATIVE AGENDA:

Discuss Scope, Approach, Schedule  
Identify Applicable Chemical Safety Criteria  
Develop Screening Criteria for Site Selection  
Develop Question Set  
Develop Project Plan  
Discuss Review Output and Format

CONTACT: Please provide name, phone and fax numbers of representatives NOT LATER THAN FEBRUARY 18, 1994 to:

Mary Meadows                      301-903-8805

Additional information on logistics and background will be provided to Working Group members at that time.